

in the attack, to be followed up by castor oil or salts, if it has not the effect of purging freely; but towards the conclusion, or when the dyspnœa has been considerably lessened, the constitutional effects of calomel will expedite the complete restoration to health.

In the winter season it is very important that the temperature of the patient's apartment should be kept as high as 60 deg. of Fahr. If he breathes a cold air, it chills the skin and aggravates the inflammation.

One case of prolapsus uteri has been admitted. She had been affected with the complaint during eighteen months. During the last six months the whole uterus had been outside the vagina, and the os uteri was ulcerated all round the opening. I returned the uterus to the vagina, put on one of my trusses, and the next day she went to work, and has not since made any complaint.

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ART. V. *On Apoplexy and Palsy.* By ALEXANDER SOMERVAIL, M. D.,  
of Essex County, Virginia.

In January, 1786, I first saw a case of apoplexy. The subject was a man in easy circumstances, ætat. about 60; he lived as such gentlemen in this part of Virginia did in those days—a full table, spirit and water before and after dinner, more or less, perhaps a mint julep before breakfast, seldom coming near intoxication. The evening before his attack he was very much intoxicated, even to insensibility. Next morning he was suffering as usual in such circumstances, nausea, vomiting, vertigo, headache, &c. After some hours in this situation apoplexy came on and terminated in coma, in which condition I saw him, about an hour from the attack. He was bled and a blister applied to the head. In two hours another physician came, he was then bled more largely, the coma continued till next morning when he died.

In November, 1787, a gentleman, ætat. about 35, a full liver, and for a few years (two or three) a hard drinker, chiefly rum and water. His custom was when the desire for drink came on him, to drink, in company or by himself, to complete intoxication, and keep that up day and night till he became sick, with vomiting, and all the horrible feelings usual in such situations; then to call on me under the dread of a fit and death thereby. When thus suffering a fit came on; I was present and bled him; he recovered so as to walk about next day, but that night he died.

In June, 1800, a man, ætat. about 60, among the working planters, a very large frame, full of flesh and blood, but not corpulent. With his manner of living I was not acquainted, but have no doubt he used a full allowance of meat and bread, with cider and brandy. He had palsy of one side

a few days; his pulse was large and full, by far the largest artery I have ever felt. I thought there could be no mistake in bleeding him, which I did, gave a purgative and blistered. He died in two days.

From these and some other cases I began to doubt the propriety of the depleting plan; in particular the coming on of apoplexy after the stimulus of spirit had subsided, and the opposite state had come, and I have also heard of similar cases on good information, and of late years. I thought the disease consisted in the suspension of the nervous power from over excitement, and time was required for its reproduction from the arterial system.

In 1804, a lady, *ætat.* upwards of 70, and for many years in good health, and a near neighbour, when finishing a hearty dinner, fell from the table speechless, her face drawn to one side. I was soon there, found her vomiting; I gave, with difficulty, a solution of sulphate of copper, which emptied the stomach effectually; she was relieved, lived seven years and had no return.

In 1807, a middle-aged man in poor circumstances lost the use of one side. I gave him the muriated tincture of iron, he took ten drops every two hours until six ounces were taken; he recovered entirely. Died from fever in 1815; no return of palsy.

Since that I had an aged mulatto woman, with palsy of one side. She had been cook in a full living family, and corpulent. The tincture of iron, I believe, was given to her faithfully, but had no effect.

In October, 1812, a gentleman, *ætat.* 66, tall and spare, a hearty eater, a great smoker, used a little spirit every morning before dinner, and in the evening, and had long been in good health; was a member of congress from Kentucky, was passing the interval between the sessions with his friends in Virginia, and made his home with his brother, who was a near neighbour. They were together at a friend's, near twenty miles off, where he was taken with palsy; he came home with his brother where I was present. After getting him in bed, his brother, being an esteemed physician and friend, asked me to bleed him; to this I objected, endeavouring to show the injurious consequences as already mentioned, and proposed an emetic and cathartic followed with the muriate of iron. This was assented to and instantly executed. Next day the relief was manifest; he began the muriate and continued it through the winter. He was able to walk in about a week; went to the meeting of congress, and after the 4th of March returned to his family in Kentucky. He died in 1832 from old age; no return of palsy.

This summer while reading the *Life of Sir Walter Scott*, by J. G. Lockhart, I was surprised to perceive the old system of bleeding and starvation applied in all its force with partial relief; but the system giving way, the disease returning every time worse, and returning sooner. While reading this I received a letter from my brother giving an account of a slight attack in himself, treated exactly in the same way. This made me attend more particularly to Sir Walter's case. He was a full liver, a large drinker, but

nearly incapable of intoxication, a powerful frame of body and mind, capable of great exertion, and these powers in constant use, and very often to the utmost stretch. While health continued the daily waste was well supplied. But the time came when mental distress (as is customary) impaired the digestive powers, producing changes on the ingesta and secretions in the alimentary canal, thereby irritating the nerves of these organs; these radiated to the head, &c., producing the complaints in question or others of a complicated and distressing nature. Then began bleeding, &c., as there recorded.

It appears to me that apoplexy and palsy are not produced by increased arterial action; but, as far as the blood is concerned, it is retained in the veins from a diminution of nervous power; that want of nervous energy is the disease. This comes on suddenly; like a muscle in contraction receiving a small stroke, it instantly becomes powerless, and time is required to restore it. I suppose the nervous power is derived from the blood and respiration. Leucophlegmasia is accompanied by feebleness and want of energy; the blood is not arterialized; healthy blood is necessary to nervous energy; and though there may be too much blood there may also be too little. The healthy standard should be maintained by a diet suited to the digestive powers and the necessity of the system. When these powers are diminished much less should be taken in than they can manage and no more should be received until that already taken is fully disposed of. Instead of this, all was taken away from Sir Walter at once and kept away. Wine and spirit were properly forbidden; but the want of nourishment, from so abstemious a course, produced a loss of muscular power and emaciation, and again indigestion and a more severe attack, and so repeatedly, until by the transfer of continual irritation (from irritating substances in the alimentary canal) to the brain, organic lesion was formed there, and death followed.

In spring, 1771, my father had his children inoculated with small pox; my youngest sister, a year and a half old, was breaking out very full; she was carried out on a cold windy day and kept out a long time; when brought in she was cold and colourless; the eruption had disappeared and never returned. She was paralytic, could neither speak nor move. Of all this I have a distinct remembrance. After a time, some weeks, her speech returned suddenly, and she recovered. She died from croup in 1775, but as long as she lived her right arm often fell powerless by her side, and was restored again. I suppose a deleterious substance was absorbed in this case, depriving the nerves of their energy, and when expelled, the power returned. The poison of wine or spirit suspends the nervous power for a time, as far as sensation and motion are concerned.